Broadcast of local advertising and non-political news

2807. SHRI C. PERUMAL: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it has been proposed to allow broadcast of local advertising and non-political news in community radio; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSI): (a) and (b) The proposed policy is before a Group of Ministers.

Repeal of Prasar Bharati Act

2808. SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering a proposal to repeal the Prasar Bharati Act and restore the earlier status of Prasar Bharati and Doordarshan;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor, and

(c) by when a decision in this regard is likely to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Compounding losses by Prasar Bharati

2809. SHRI RAASHID ALVI: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether following the directions from the Supreme Court, the Centre is close to finalising a solution to public broadcaster Prasar Bharati's compounding losses, now touching Rs. 5500 crore;

(b) if so, whether a Group of Ministers consiting of Home; Finance and External Affairs and other key departments has been set up to work out a plan to cut corporation out of red;

(c) whether formation of this Group was announced in September, 2005; and

(d) by when the Group is likely to submit its report and whether any interim report has been submitted by it?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSI): (a) Prasar Bharati's mandate as a public service broadcaster is to reach every nook and corner of the country without keeping only commercial considerations in mind. Keeping this broader objective in view efforts are made to maximise revenue earnings. Financial support from the government is provided in addition.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

Press and Registration of Books Act, 1867

2810. SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Delhi High Court has directed Government for changes in the Press and Registration of Books Act, 1867 which has a reflection of the "cononial mindset";

(b) whether according to the court, 138 year old Act, particularly section 5(2) needed to be changed as it required printer and publisher of a newspaper to appear in person or through an agent before a magistrate for declaration in respect of publication of newspaper;

(c) if so, whether government have considered the directive of Delhi High Court; and

(d) if so, by when a final decision in this regard is likely to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSI): (a) to (c) No Sir. However, the Hon'ble High Court of Delhi during the proceeding of a case has made observations on the Press and Registration of Books (PRB) Act, 1867, including Section 5 (2) of the Act. The Government is not contemplating any change in Section 5 (2) of the PRB Act, 1867.

(d) Does not arise.